Cafcass to achieve faster real-time budgeting with Advanced's SaaS finance software

Submitted by: Advanced Computer Software Group Limited
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21 June 2016 – Cafcass (The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service) will go live in August with Advanced's cloud-hosted budgeting and forecasting solution Collaborative Planning, to empower budget holders with real-time access to finance information from anywhere.

The organisation will implement the solution, alongside Advanced Cloud Invoicing, as a Software-as-a-Service model hosted in the Amazon Web Services.

The roll-out of Collaborative Planning and Advanced Cloud Invoicing follows the successful deployment of Advanced's e5 financial management system with document management technology (powered by V1) earlier this year.

Cafcass is an arm's-length body in England which provides support and advice in family court cases involving children and young people. The organisation employs around 1,700 staff across 42 offices in England and is the largest social work employer in the country.

Advanced was selected from a shortlist of four software providers via the Crown Commercial Services procurement framework. Collaborative Planning will be used to manage a budget of £114 million and will provide around 50 budget holders with real-time access to financial information. This will dramatically reduce the amount of time and resources required to produce financial reports and forecasts.

Julie Brown, Director of Resources at Cafcass, says, "The implementation of Collaborative Planning will be a huge benefit to us. Like a lot of organisations we spend too much time trying to create reports for budget holders; Collaborative Planning will put the power in the budget holders' hands and give them direct access to real-time information at the click of a button."

Advanced Cloud Invoicing will automatically process invoices without any human intervention required, further speeding up accounting processes. All of Advanced's solutions are being hosted in the cloud in line with Cafcass' strategy of deploying applications off-premise.

Brown adds, "We have an established strategy of moving towards cloud-based solutions and a SaaS infrastructure, as a cost-effective and efficient model. A lot of our staff work on the move and remotely, so the ability to access information from anywhere is absolutely vital and will support our staff who work in the field – especially our frontline social workers.

"Using hosted solutions will support future-proof access to our finance system and offers the potential to move to new working practices, for example if we chose to follow a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy."

Since January 2016 the organisation's finance and administration staff have been using e5 to manage purchase to payment processes and general ledger from which monthly and annual forecasts and reports are produced. Around 7,000 invoices per year are electronically scanned using V1 document management

software. The implementation involved a complex migration of seven years' worth of general ledger and accounts payable data.

e5 also imports data from Cafcass' payroll system and the organisation is looking to integrate Collaborative Planning with e5 by creating an application programme interface (API) which will upload information from one system to the other.

Brown adds, "Like all public bodies we face funding pressures, and Advanced's software will help us to operate efficiently within our budget while meeting rising demand for our services and continuing to support children in need of our help."

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Notes to Editors

For Cafcass' logo please click here (http://resource.advancedcomputersoftware.com/images/uploads/cafcass_logo_2014_vector_web.jpg)

About Advanced

Advanced is the third largest provider of software and IT Services to the UK market.

Through our enterprise and market focused solutions we positively impact millions of people's lives through continually investing in our people, partnerships and own technologies to stay focused on our markets', customers' and their stakeholders' needs.

We enable our customers to drive efficiencies, savings and growth opportunities through focused, right-first-time software solutions that evolve with the changing needs of their business and the markets they operate in.

True partnership is the defining thing that makes us different from the competition. We pride ourselves on delivering focused software solutions for public sector, enterprise commercial and health & care organisations that simplify complex business challenges and deliver immediate value.

Advanced is a Sunday Times Top Track 250 Company 2015 and was ranked in the Deloitte UK Fast 50 which recognises the 50 fastest growing technology companies in the UK and a winner of the Tech Company of the Year in PwC's UK Tech Awards in 2014.
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About Cafcass

Cafcass represents children in family court cases, making sure that their voices are heard and that the decisions that are made about them are in their best interests.

We are the single largest social work employer in the UK. We operate in 17 service areas across England, with over 1,700 employees working throughout 42 offices.

Cafcass was awarded Best Social Work Employer in the Social Worker of the Year Awards in 2015, and was also awarded the Best Flexible Working award for its approach to incorporating technology at the Working Families Awards in the same year.

Cafcass is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Ministry of Justice.

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